



St CHRISTOPHER'S
CREATING BRIGHTER
FUTURES

Trustee



OXFORD HR
WORLD LEADERS

Welcome from Hanif Barma, Chair

Thank you for your interest in joining the Board of St Christopher's Fellowship, a children's charity that has been providing care and support to young people since 1870.

At St Christopher's, we are passionate in our belief that every child, regardless of their background or their journey through life, should have the opportunity for a brighter future, with everything we do contributing to make this a reality.

We have established ourselves as a creative and learning organisation using 'evidence based' best practice and tools to improve outcomes (Social Pedagogy, Attachment Theory), which has included building expert partnerships with academic and other institutions. We put active participation of children and young people at the heart of all we do, including service design and delivery, creating positive, meaningful experiences that equip them for life and we forge meaningful and lasting relationships based on communication, collaboration and 'haltung' (living our values) with our service users, staff and stakeholders.

We are also now one of the leading providers of services for vulnerable children and young people, which extends to include fostering, children's homes and accommodation and support for those aged 16 and over.

Over the years, St Christopher's has helped thousands of children and young people to thrive, develop, and move towards independence

Following a recent review of the skills which currently sit within our Board we have identified a requirement to further enhance its strength, with the appointment of a new Trustee. This individual will bring local and central government commissioning expertise in relation to children's services and social care, to assist St Christopher's as we navigate the changing service commissioning environment.

Candidates will be expected to demonstrate a passion for St Christopher's work and the desire to make a difference to a national organisation supporting children and young people, an ability to work as part of a Trustee team providing constructive support and advice to the Executive Team, a willingness to serve on Board sub-committees, and strategic decision making ability.

If you are interested in this unique role and would welcome the opportunity to have an informal conversation, please contact our advising consultant **Philip Nelson** on 01865 403298 or via email at pnelson@oxfordhr.co.uk.

About us

St Christopher's is one of the leading providers of services for children and young people in the voluntary sector. As a registered charity, we work across the UK and the Isle of Man running successful residential and fostering services.

We are a child-focused organisation that places young people at the centre of everything we do. Our six values run through all of our work: caring, honest, respectful, professional, flexible and creative.

The principles of social pedagogy shape our philosophy of care. This is a holistic approach that centres on building positive relationships with young people to bring out their full potential. Young people really feel the benefits of this – they say that staff understand them better, which means they can trust them more. They are supported by staff to try things for themselves and learn from their experiences, even if it means making some mistakes along the way.

We use the internationally benchmarked Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and Attachment Style Interviews to create tailored care plans for young people. The quality of our care is guaranteed through external evaluation by the Centre for Abuse and Trauma Studies at Middlesex University.

No other provider works with these tools in such an integrated way to get better outcomes for young people.

At St Christopher's, staff continually develop their skills and knowledge through our comprehensive training programmes. We run core induction training for new starters and we are rolling out social pedagogy training across all of our services. We invest heavily in our staff because we value them – without them, we wouldn't be able to make a difference to so many young people's lives.

Young people are supported to develop their skills too, so that they will be prepared for living independently as adults. They can earn AQA awards in things like budgeting, cooking and travelling alone, which are nationally recognised qualifications that support them to secure employment, training or places in education.

Participation is key to what we do. Young people in our care are always encouraged and supported to have their say, whether it's giving feedback on the way their home is run or contributing to government reports on the future of children's services. We want them to know that their opinions are valued and that we're always ready to listen and act.

What do our external stakeholders say about our services?

"Young people achieve positive outcomes and are provided with high quality care within a warm, caring, nurturing environment with firm and consistent boundaries."

Outstanding Ofsted Inspection

"The service provides excellent care for young people... The staff group are versatile and dynamic and present as dedicated and professional."

Isle of Man Inspection report

"Children are all engaged in education and achieving high attendance levels. An established staff team works positively to help children address and reduce concerning behaviours."

Ofsted report

What do children and young people say about St Christopher's?

"I like it here. It's got a good feel. I feel comfortable to be me. The house is nice and I like my room, there are lots of different areas to use so I can get space. Staff are really friendly and they really care and want to do things with me."

"The staff know you. They know how to calm you down. They sort things out for you. They know how to help you see how you can be the best you can be. They make you laugh and keep a smile on your face."

"It is good to know that someone cares. Some of us haven't always had that and sometimes feel like you are on your own or that people don't want you. The staff here are kind and make you feel wanted."



Where are we today?

St Christopher's currently works in Southern, Eastern and Central England and the Isle of Man, providing residential childcare, fostering services, supported housing, services for runaway children, a children's secure care home, leaving care services, 16 plus services, consultancy and education. All of these commissioned services are gained through a competitive commissioning or tender process and are underpinned by the same values and the same goal to support children and young people to fulfil their potential, grow into responsible adults and make a positive contribution to society.

At any one time, several hundred people, mainly children and young people, are receiving services from St Christopher's, and many more are able to access runaway and support services.

Over recent years we have faced a challenging external environment, with continuing cuts in public funding having had a direct impact on our entire sector. However, despite these challenges we continue to deliver brighter futures for the children and young people we look after, by driving through even greater levels of efficiency and reducing costs, which has enabled us to have a greater focus on front line services where the real impact of our work is felt.

We remain in a strong financial position, and our balance sheet shows a healthy net asset position.

We have continued to innovate in our service delivery, demonstrated by the piloting of two new Safe Steps children's homes to care for girls aged 12 to 17 who are at particular risk of child sex exploitation or other serious community threats. We have contributed to the national review of children's residential care in England.

We're inspired by the successes and development of the children and young people we work with, actively engaging them in many aspects of what we do.



Moving forward

St Christopher's will continue to provide high quality services, developing innovative services and best practice, being an organisation that policy makers choose to consult when considering issues relevant to looked after children, care leavers and vulnerable young people, and will ensure that the organisation remains financially sustainable.

We also recognise that new initiatives and services can require an initial investment, prior to services becoming financially sustainable in the longer term. Consequently, we aim to ensure that the charity has sufficient reserves to both manage risk and develop new services.

Our thanks

We are proud of our dedicated staff and continue to be impressed by how they display St Christopher's values to be caring and respectful, professional and flexible, honest and creative: values which lie at the heart of what we do.

We have also benefited from working with commissioners who are forward-looking, and have embraced working with St Christopher's as a partner to deliver the best outcomes possible for the children and young people we look after.



Role Profile

Remuneration	The role of Trustee does not attract any financial remuneration, although expenses for travel may be claimed.
Location	1 Putney High Street, London, SW15 1SZ
Time commitment	Trustees are expected to attend meetings of the Council, which are held every 6-8 weeks, normally on weekday evenings. There is an additional expectation of attendance at one or more away-days per year, which may be held on a weekend.
Reporting to	Council (Board)

Purpose

Our Trustees ensure that St Christopher's fulfils its duty to its beneficiaries and delivers on our vision, mission and values. Members of the Board of Trustees are jointly and severally responsible for the overall governance and strategic direction of the charity; its financial health; the probity of its activities; and developing the organisation's aims, objectives and goals in accordance with the governing document, legal and regulatory guidelines.

Role

St Christopher's seeks to appoint a new member of the Board who has a strong empathy with our mission to create brighter futures for children and young people. Experience, skills and expertise in public sector commissioning, and an interest in children and young people are essential, as well as track record of achieving positive outcomes, combined with an in-depth understanding of our work and its impact.

Our Trustees are also encouraged to visit our services, attending engagement events, talking to staff and young people and being supportive of our frontline services.



Duties of our Trustees

- To ensure that St Christopher's complies with its Memorandum and Articles of Association, charity law, company law and any other relevant legislation or regulations.
- To ensure that St Christopher's pursues its objects as defined in its Memorandum and Articles of Association.
- To ensure that St Christopher's applies its resources exclusively in pursuance of its objects, i.e. St Christopher's must not spend money on activities which are not included in its own objects, no matter how worthwhile or charitable those activities are.
- To contribute actively to Council's role in giving firm strategic direction to the organisation, setting overall policy, defining goals and setting targets, and evaluating performance against agreed targets.
- To safeguard the good name and values of St Christopher's.
- To ensure the effective and efficient administration of the organisation.
- To ensure the financial stability of the organisation.
- To protect and manage the property of the charity and to ensure the proper investment of the charity's funds.
- To appoint the Chief Executive and monitor his/her performance.

In addition to the above duties, each Trustee should use any specific skills, knowledge or experience they have to help the Board of Trustees reach sound decisions, and more broadly outside meetings to support St Christopher's work. This may involve scrutinising Council papers, leading discussions, focusing on key issues and providing advice and guidance on new initiatives or on other issues in which the Trustee has special expertise.

The above list of duties is indicative only and not exhaustive. Trustees are expected to perform all such additional duties as are reasonably commensurate with the role.

Trustees are also required to adhere to St Christopher's Trustee Code which sets out the expectations of Trustees.

Person Specification

For this appointment, we seek a Trustee who will bring to the Board, experience, skills and expertise in public sector commissioning, an interest in children and young people, and a track record of achieving positive outcomes, combined with an in-depth understanding of our work and its impact

- A commitment to the mission and vision of St Christopher's.
- A willingness to devote the necessary time and effort to undertaking the role of Trustee.
- Strategic vision.
- Good, independent judgement.
- An ability to think creatively.
- A willingness to speak their mind and do the right thing.
- An understanding and acceptance of legal duties, responsibilities and liabilities of trusteeship.
- An ability to work effectively as a member of a team and within an agreed consensus.
- A willingness to invest time to engage and understand the organisation and the sector and undertake training necessary to discharge the role of Trustee of St Christopher's.
- Displaying Nolan's seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.



How to apply

To apply for this position, please download and read the Appointment Brief, then complete our online application form. Please complete the form in sentence case – there is no need to use block capitals.

You will be asked to submit a copy of your CV, together with a supporting statement and a list of non-executive directorships and trustee posts that you currently hold. These documents will be redirected to the dedicated email address for this assignment: creatingbrighterfutures@oxfordhr.co.uk

Please ensure that your submission fully addresses the appointment criteria in the person specification.

St Christopher's is a national charity and actively encourages interest from potential Trustees from other parts of the country, and particularly those regions where the charity runs services.

You should provide the names, positions, organisations and contact telephone numbers of two referees. References will only be taken once your express permission has been granted.

We would be grateful if you could also let us know if you require any special provision as a result of any disability should you be called for interview.

Finally, please ensure that you have included your mobile and home telephone numbers, as well as dates when you will not be available or might have difficulty with the indicative timetable:

Timetable

Closing date

Monday 8 May

Preliminary interviews

With Oxford HR: week commencing 15 May

Visit to a service

Week commencing 29 May

Final Panel Interviews

Week commencing 5 June

These dates may be subject to change, and applicants will be advised in advance should this happen.

Selection process

All candidates will receive feedback within four working days of the closing date. Shortlisted candidates may be required to undertake an additional assessment prior to the final interview.

Queries

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information or would like to have an informal discussion, please contact

Philip Nelson on 01865 403298 or via email at pnelson@oxfordhr.co.uk.